



California Postsecondary Education Commission

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wilson Elementary School
409 Magnolia Street, Gridley, California

CSU Chico – Gridley Unified School District partnership receives almost \$1 million to address achievement gap

SACRAMENTO — October 24, 2008 — California State University, Chico in partnership with Gridley Unified School District, has won funding for a new professional development project to help improve elementary school teaching in the core content area of science. The partnership has been awarded a four-year Improving Teacher Quality (ITQ) grant of \$978,884 by the California Postsecondary Education Commission.

The project, “Science and Academic Literacy,” will serve all 52 teachers who work at the district’s two elementary schools in Gridley. They will learn science content, science inquiry strategies, and how to integrate English Language Development into science lessons. The project will use the unique “Hands On Lab” at CSU Chico, and will train teachers how to improve student achievement in science and in English Language Arts. The grant is part of the federal ITQ program, funded through the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 to provide high quality professional development for current teachers.

Over the past two decades, the Commission has awarded more than 200 ITQ grants totaling \$110 million. The 2008 grants, totaling \$5.8 million, address California’s achievement gap based on race, ethnicity, or language. The grants improve classroom strategies in core subjects. The grants require rigorous evaluation to demonstrate how professional development affects student achievement.

“While the professional development provided by the grants is vital, the evaluation requirement is especially important,” the Commission’s Executive Director Murray J. Haberman said. “Being required to demonstrate the impact of professional development on student success, not just on teacher practice, supports the Commission’s commitment to accountability in educational programs.”

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Commission Chair Olivia K. Singh said, “The grant plays an important role in making sure every student has the opportunity to learn from a highly qualified teacher. The teachers who participate will learn new techniques to address the needs of students and help them become lifelong learners.”

More information may be found online at <http://www.cpec.ca.gov/federalprograms/teacherquality.asp>.

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The California Postsecondary Education Commission advises the Governor and Legislature on higher education policy and fiscal issues. The Commission’s primary focus is to ensure that the state’s educational resources are used effectively to provide Californians with postsecondary education opportunities.